

Tyrone Wilson
Domestic Policy Subcommittee
Oversight and Government Reform Committee
New Orleans, Louisiana
Monday, October 29, 2007

Katrina Clean Up

My name is Tyrone Wilson. I live in New Orleans. Before Katrina, I had been working for the Orleans Parish school system as a bus monitor. I also worked as a substitute teacher and did volunteer work for the New Orleans Recreation Department.

The new school year had just started before Katrina hit in 2005. I had evacuated to Dallas the Saturday night before the storm. Like everyone else, I found out what had happened by watching the news. I came back about two weeks later and saw the devastation. I finally moved back to New Orleans that October and found out we had all been fired from the public school system.

A friend of mine told me about Phoenix and Global. I went to work for them. I had worked with them for two weeks straight and hadn't gotten paid. I got the name of Brian Carter, the head of Phoenix and Global, and spoke to him on the phone. I had other workers there standing around me along with a supervisor from ECC. Carter said that ECC had never paid Phoenix and Global and that's why he couldn't pay us. The ECC man took the phone and told Carter that that was not true – ECC had paid him.

When I got back on the phone with Carter, he was angry with me. But I told him that I had been working seven days a week and told him that a lot of us from here were the ones who had gone through Katrina. I told him a lot of other guys had come from Atlanta and other parts of the country to help clean up. I told him how wrong he was for not paying people.

Carter met us later and paid us something. I got about \$900 which was much less than he owed me. He said he had taken money out of our checks for taxes. I had worked three to four weeks straight; twelve hours a day; seven days a week. But if I hadn't taken the money that day, I wouldn't have gotten anything.

We were later told that JNE was going to take over. I worked from October until Christmas 2005 and got a check for \$140 and a second check we were told we couldn't cash until after New Years. Neither of those checks were right and we had no money for Christmas.

I continued to work through February for JNE. I wasn't paid for several weeks at a time though. We were doing the clean up and debris work as well as the "white goods." When we did get paid, it was never the right amount. And, I never got any overtime pay.

One day, when about 30 of us hadn't been paid, I went with Jeffrey and another man to the World Trade Center in New Orleans where JNE had an office. We went to the ECC

office first and found out that JNE was a subcontractor of Hamp Construction. While in the building, we spoke to Mr. Hamp directly and told him people were not getting paid. He said for us to write up all the days people hadn't been paid. They found some money to pay us and that was the last check we got from JNE.

I then worked for EENG a company that oversaw the clean up work in the city. I worked as an "ineligible waste inspector" and inspected debris for asbestos and other hazardous waste before it was hauled away. They were still hiring people, but started cutting our hours. I quit in June or July of 2006. That next school year, I applied for a job driving buses. I started that job in September, 2006 and that's what I am doing now.

Sometime after May 2006, Jeffrey and I spoke to people at the Loyola Law Clinic. They later told me they had filed my case with the Department of Labor. It wasn't until around the time Jeffrey testified in June 2007 in Washington that I got a call from the Department of Labor. I sent them check stubs and other information. I haven't heard back from them at all.

I still see some of those contractors here in New Orleans operating their businesses and making money. Something needs to be done about them making millions and millions of dollars while the people actually doing the work can't get paid what they rightfully earned. Something has to be done.

JNE ENTERPRISES, INC.

Tyrone Wilson
Date 2/3/2006 Type Bill Reference 1/5-1/18/06

Original Amt. 203.10
Balance Due 206.10
2/3/2006 Discount
Check Amount

Payment
206.10
206.10

Local Chase

206.10

JNE ENTERPRISES INC.

1058

Tyrone Wilson

Date	Type	Reference
12/30/2005	Bill	11/28-12/7/2005

12/30/2005	Balance Due	Discount	Check Amount
	865.62		

Payment
865.62
865.62

94.5 hours

865.62

JNE ENTERPRISES INC.

Tyrone Wilson

Date 01/06/2006
Type Bill
Reference 12/8-12/19/05

1085

Original Amt.	215.26
Balance Due	215.26
Discount	
Check Amount	
Payment	215.26
	215.26

215.26

215.26